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14. ABSTRACT

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This paper briefly examines naval force structure since the cold war as well as current operational naval force concepts. Carrier and Expeditionary Strike Groups as well as Expeditionary Strike Force staffing concepts at both the tactical and operational levels of war are covered. Finally the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander Tacmemo 3-32-03 is looked at as an operational level process.

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Stacking the Deck: Staffing for Success at the Operational Level

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

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14 February 2005

Abstract

U.S. Naval Force doctrinal awareness continues to rise since the cold wars end, currently exemplified by SeaPower 21, which provides a vision to more efficiently integrate and project maritime force. However, today's Naval Forces are quite akin in basic structure and staffing as those that sailed in the post-Vietnam era. Technology has brought watershed capability improvements in precision fires and data transmission, but naval forces have not similarly advanced command and control frameworks or operational level processes to keep pace.

This paper briefly examines naval force structure since the cold war as well as current operational naval force concepts. Carrier and Expeditionary Strike Groups as well as Expeditionary Strike Force staffing concepts at both the tactical and operational levels of war are covered. Finally the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander Tacmemo is looked at as an operational level process.

We are talking about a conflict that is going to last years, not months – perhaps 30 years – based on a clash of principles and values. The Navy is configured to meet a blue-water threat. While we still need to retain the ability to deal with the traditional conflict, we need to reshape our force structure to meet the challenges of the 21st century.[1]

Admiral Vern Clarke, USN

INTRODUCTION

Today's American Naval Force had its genesis in the Cold War and even though the world has since changed significantly, naval force structure still bears close resemblance to that heritage. Names have been changed to suggest new capabilities – Battle Groups are now Carrier Strike Groups (CSG's), Amphibious Ready Group's are now Expeditionary Strike Groups (ESG's), Naval Expeditionary Task Forces are now Expeditionary Strike Forces (ESF's), but substantive changes in force and staffing structures are harder to find. Despite limited special case operations and some published statements to the contrary, CSG's, ESG's and ESFs remain configured and staffed to operate exclusively at the tactical level of war.[2]

Some important questions arise for the future: Is the theater Combatant Commander satisfied with what the CSG or ESG brings to the table? Would the Combatant Commander desire more operational level capability from attached naval forces? Should CSG and ESG echelon forces possess an ability to function at the operational level of war ?

Tomorrow's naval force will be much different if contemporary discussion regarding future naval transformation bears tangible fruit. Sea Power 21 and its various Sea-components (Sea Shield, Sea Basing, and Sea Strike) enabled by ForceNet will:

> …continue the evolution of U.S. naval power from the blue-water, war-at-sea focus of the "Maritime Strategy" (1986), through the littoral emphasis of "…From the Sea" (1992) and "Forward from the Sea" (1994), to a broadened strategy in which naval forces are fully integrated into global joint operations against regional and transnational dangers.[3]

The ability for naval forces to operate at the operational level of war is a stated Sea Basing goal and an implied SeaPower 21 goal found in the Global Concept of Operations.[4] This paper examines past, present, and proposed maritime operations to determine what operational level functions, if any, CSG, ESG and ESF commanders lack, as well as offering a solution for any identified shortfalls.

PAST AS PROLOGUE

The operational level links the tactical employment of forces to strategic objectives. The focus at this level is on operational art — the use of military forces to achieve strategic goals through the design, organization, integration, and conduct of strategies, campaigns, major operations, and battles.[5] (JP 3-0)

Emerging Sea Power 21 doctrine aside, current day Carrier and Expeditionary Strike Groups are still comprised of naval forces quite similar to Vietnam vintage Task Forces built to counter the Soviet Union. The post-Vietnam USSR naval activity increase, epitomized by exercise *Okean 75* featuring operations in the Gulf of Mexico, compelled President Reagan to restore America's military superiority with across the board defense acquisition increases.[6]

The ensuing Maritime Strategy described a U.S. Naval forward deployed global scheme implemented by Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral Thomas B. Hayward and his successor Admiral James D. Watkins:

> The Navy should exploit its inherent flexibility and mobility by hitting the enemy when and where he was most vulnerable. Rather than passively trying to guard America's sea lines of communication to Europe, the fleet should mount offensive operations in northern Europe and the Far East and force the Soviet Union to fight a disadvantageous two-front war.[7]

The Maritime Strategy successfully sold to Congress, largely due to Secretary of the Navy John Lehman's efforts, centered on the Carrier Battle Group (CVBG) as a fighting force component.[8] At its peak the strategy featured 15 carrier battle groups regularly rotating through forward deployments world wide.

Carrier Forces - Attendant to the global U.S. naval presence was Composite Warfare Commander (CWC) doctrine. CWC doctrine functionally organizes naval fleet tactics: Air Warfare (AW), undersea warfare (USW), surface warfare (SUW), mine warfare (MIW), amphibious warfare (AMW), command and control warfare (C2W), and strike warfare (STW).[9] Thus Officers in Tactical Command (OTC) are enabled to effectively manage both low and high density attacks by delegating control to various warfare commanders. It was best executed when individual battle groups fought in exclusive space, and issues arose when CVBG's were combined with other CVBG's or amphibious forces. Those issues prevail today; although Tacmemos and evolving doctrine combined with information technology improvements aid interoperability.[10]

CWC tactical level decisions require the commander to have situational awareness (SA) regarding the battle space. In the past, various battle group platforms each individually collected and compiled information to build SA. Information was then passed by radio or data link among CVBG platforms. Eventually information was automatically linked among CVBG assets, incrementally decreasing transmission times. However, the SA provided by these sensors was bounded by radio transmission limitations and / or the sensor's physical location. Moreover, information quality was often contradictory, degraded, or lacking due to system reliability.

Recent information technology improvements have given warfare commanders much higher fidelity battle space SA. In some cases tactical level commanders have too much information regarding the surrounding battle space.

As information transmission quantity, quality and speed improved, naval leaders were compelled to expand the battle groups C2 role to the operational level of war. In the early

1990's the Navy experimented with standing up Joint Force Air Component Commands (JFACC) aboard naval vessels. Many tests were conducted to validate the JFACC afloat concept and some achieved success in small scale operations.[11] However, significant shortcomings were identified as operations grew in size and by 2004 official U.S. Navy policy ended JFACC afloat involvement.[12]

Despite post-Cold War "Forward…From the Sea" doctrine, naval strategy and employment remain rather similar to the Maritime Strategy in that both require forward deployed global forces. It can be argued that the biggest driver of change in naval operations was technology vice a well articulated strategy. Furthermore, the absence of a clear pre-9/11 enemy made it difficult to craft cogent security strategy.

SeaPower 21 vision is an attempt to reconcile technology advances with post-9/11 threats. The vision espouses to "fully integrate naval forces into global joint operations against regional and transnational dangers."[13] What doctrinal transformations accompany the SeaPower 21 vision to increase carrier and amphibious naval force operational level capability?

Amphibious Forces – Amphibious Ready Groups (ARG) with embarked Marine Amphibious Units (MAU- Marine Expeditionary Unit or MEU in present day vernacular), fought the cold war in locations such as Lebanon and Grenada.[14] U.S. amphibious and expeditionary doctrine predates operations in World War II, and has guided operations since at every warfare level. Col. Roger M. Jaroch, USMC, states that the landing at Inchon provides a "perfect example of what might normally be considered a tactical formation (a reinforced Marine division) having significant impact at the operational level [of war]."[15] He goes on to describe how the Marine Air Ground Task Force (MAGTF) can provide the

theater commander with capabilities at the operational level of war.[16] Traditionally considered a tactical-level unit (see Figure 1), the 2,200 strong Marine Expeditionary Unit-Special Operations Capable (MEU(SOC)), has been argued to operate at the operational level of war during Somalia Operations in 1992-1994.[17]

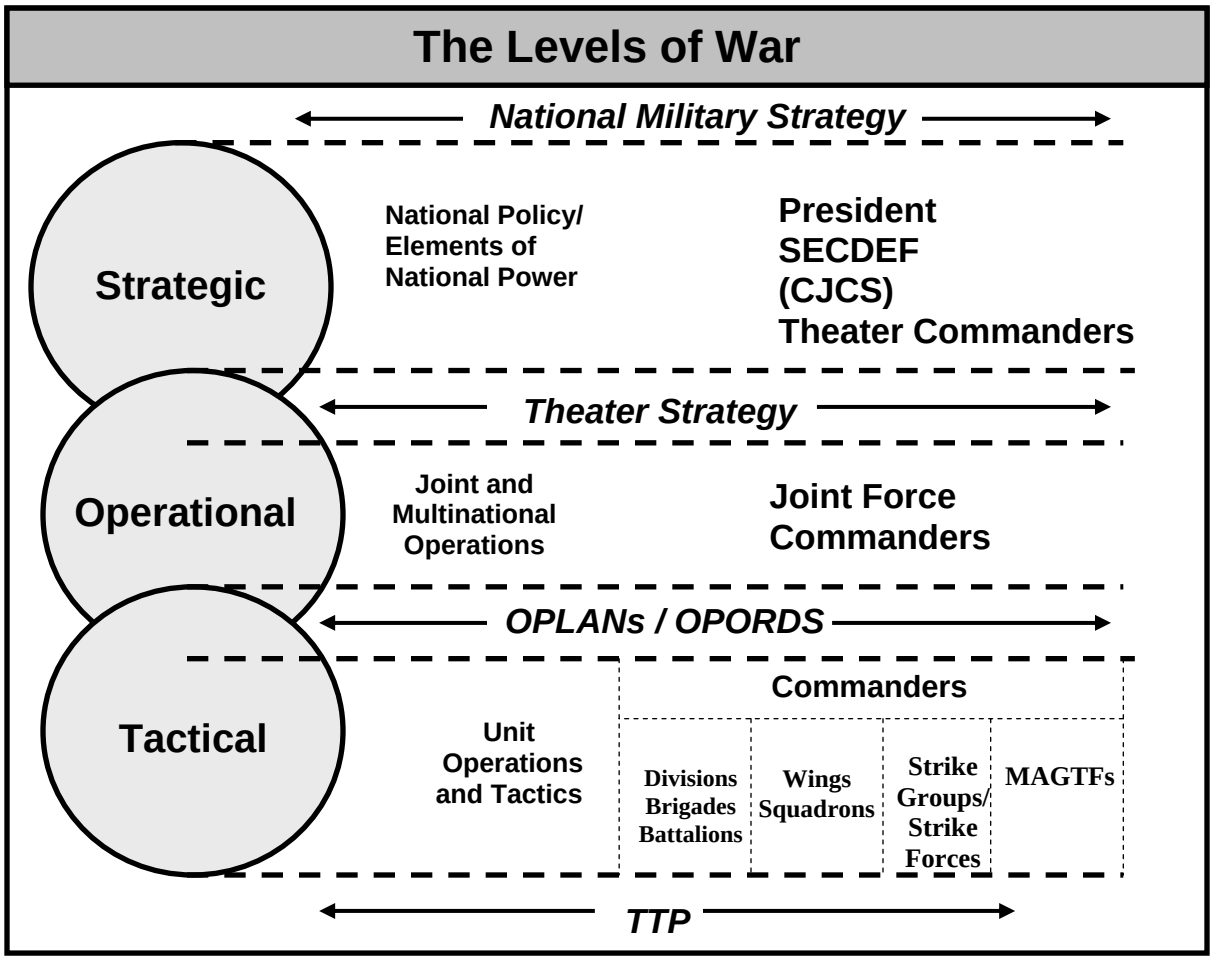

Figure 1[18]

Despite some small scale amphibious success stories, there remains discussion today regarding just what is the best way to command these amphibious forces. With Desert Storm a possible exception, there have not been large scale amphibious operations since the 1950 Inchon landings to give current doctrine a comprehensive validation.

Large operations complicate amphibious force interoperability with other joint forces. For example, during Desert Storm two Marine Expeditionary Brigades were kept at sea under JFMCC control as a deception campaign. However, the Marine service component commander was unable to assign those forces to tactical missions, in direct conflict with the USMC "single battle" concept.[19]

The Expeditionary Strike Group (ESG) is a new label for a naval force unit comprising an ARG reinforced with surface and sub-surface combatant vessels to provide additional defensive and offensive capabilities. Increased strike capabilities from carrier aircraft and surface combatants allowed traditional carrier battle groups to be trimmed down, with the "extra" vessels used to form an ESG. The goal behind ESG genesis is to increase fleet responsiveness and strategic impact by providing additional deployable independent strike groups. Current planning calls for 12 CSGs and 12 ESGs.[20]

A Center for Naval Analyses ESG staffing experiment concluding in 2004 analyzed two ESG's, each deployed with different staffing concepts. ESG-1 deployed from the West Coast with a separate 40-person staff commanded by a rear admiral. ESG-2 embarked with a 30-person staff commanded by a Navy captain and a Marine colonel in the traditional supporting / supported relationship.[21] Not officially in the experiment, ESG-3 recently deployed with a Marine general in command.

These three different staffing models each have advantages and disadvantages. ESG-1's flag officer model may allow the ESG to form a nucleus joint task force and work directly for the theater commander.[22] ESG-2 continues the status quo. ESG-3 is similar to ESG-1, though the flag officer is Marine general. Additional debate centers on whether the ESG experiment can adequately validate the concept since neither ESG-1 or ESG-2 operated

in a contested environment with the MEU(SOC) ashore, the most difficult task.[23] These issues make it doubtful whether the CNA study will end debate regarding proper ESG staffing.

The preceding look at carrier and amphibious naval force operations reveals that modern maritime doctrine continues to slowly evolve from its cold war genesis. It is true CSGs and ESGs provide a promise to better harness today's naval technological capabilities. However with minor exceptions, their C2 and support structures remain unchanged circa Vietnam. The post-9/11 naval commander is left to figure out the optimum solution.

SEAPOWER 21

The American military's biggest problem? It lets technology drive strategy, rather than letting strategy determine technology.[24] Brigadier General Don Morelli, USA (Ret.)

We can talk about transformation, but we can't do it until we come to grips with what kinds of conflicts we are going to face,…[25] Admiral Vern Clarke, USN

The contemporary American military is undergoing dramatic transformation to reshape its forces for future conflict. Not an easy task since the modern warfare spectrum now extends from near peer competitors to single persons armed with a Weapon of Mass Destruction.

Sea Power 21 is designed to give the navy a widely dispersed combat capability, powered in part by the realization that the enemy does not solely own the right to exploit asymmetric warfare advantages.[26] However, alluding to new capabilities and the structures necessary to make them function is much easier than actually possessing those capabilities. What command and control frameworks will best provide the theater commander with results? Will widely dispersed; simultaneous low intensity conflicts require operational level planning abilities at lower, more flexible echelons?

Advanced planned major operations such as Desert Storm, OEF and OIF allow the Joint Force Commander to finely tailor command and control arrangements, reducing the need for individual CSG or ESG commanders to possess operational level capabilities. The flip side is the quickly emerging littoral crisis where the time to mass forces will be in direct proportion to the forces required. In other words, a small force striking quickly may alleviate the necessity for a larger more capable force later.

Sea Power 21 demands greater operational maneuver within reduced time factors, thereby suggesting tactical level echelons need more operational capability to make global action a reality. As the Indonesian tsunami relief effort recently demonstrated, naval forces will not always conduct operations in familiar stomping grounds. Who is going to plan, and on what timeline?

ESF - The Expeditionary Strike Force describes a new force structure formed when a CSG and ESG combine. An ESF should benefit from training evolutions during the Inter-Deployment Readiness Cycle (IRDC), but forces comprised may not regularly operate together once forward deployed. ESF members may have little notice about when and where they are required to mass or at what warfare level needed. The time it would take to form an ESF and conduct an operation would depend on the mission type, force location and threat.

Large conflicts with advance warning will allow the theater commander to create more precise command and control relationships similar to what is now found in the Central Command. Naval forces will convert operational level planning into tactical level task execution. Little organic operational level planning will be required for such large scale operations since it will be planned at a higher echelon.

Smaller conflicts or those featuring rapid development raise some questions: Will the need wait until the headquarters staff back home can provide a plan? Will that plan be adequate? Will forward deployed units "reach back" for operational level functions in Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) situations?

Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare (EMW) is the capstone concept behind U.S. Marine Corps doctrine.[27] Starting with Operational Maneuver From The Sea (OMFTS), the Marine Corps aimed to move away from traditional amphibious landings toward modern maneuver warfare.[28] This doctrine dovetails into SeaPower 21's Sea Basing concept and is designed to eventually allow operations to be conducted entirely from the sea.

Ship To Objective Maneuver (STOM) is a tactical application of EMW doctrine which aims to land forces ready to fight on arrival, vice having to assemble forces on a beach head. Increased sea based maneuver will allow forces to repeatedly land and re-embark forces up and down a coastline. Col. Art Corbett contrasts this new concept with the Inchon landings. "We had a tremendous capability at sea to strike at the enemy's rear, and then we proceeded from the beach at the speed of shoe leather. We went from great operational maneuver to a tactical battle of attrition."[29]

The ESF plays a role in future Marine Corps expeditionary maneuver warfare (EMW) doctrine by providing an increased forcible entry capability to negate enemy anti-access strategies.[30] The idea is to react quickly in order to "get a foot in the door" which prevents having to "kick in the door" later.[31]

The same command and control issues concerning ESGs also pertain to ESFs, but are further complicated by the additional forces involved. Short fuzed crises with little reaction time may be problematic for forces without operational level capabilities, ESF response time

could decrease with increased operational level staffing. Some other questions also arise: Who will command the ESF? Will it be the ESG or CSG commander? Will an ESF always be commanded by a Joint Task Force (JTF) commander?

OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM

Technology may be one answer to solve operational level staffing shortfalls and help bridge the gap between the tactical and operational war levels. Combined Task Force 50 (CTF-50), commanded by CCG-3 commander RADM Thomas Zelibor aboard USS Carl Vinson, was a case study during OEF examining Network Centric Warfare (NCW) in the U.S. Navy's FIFTH Fleet. The CCG-3 staff was lauded for efforts to embrace networking and collaboration tools that had significant effects on how missions were planned and executed.[32]

The case study examined several different technologies employed by CTF-50 during the training cycle and deployment, including: chat rooms, knowledge web (KWeb) and CommandNet. Chat rooms were created to fill information voids and then killed when no longer needed. KWeb is a relatively new system that seeks to provide "one stop shopping" for routine and time critical information. Information is "pushed" from an operator to a Web site as it becomes available. Users do not need to be a website designer to post critical information. CommandNet was created to quickly transmit critical incidents throughout a distributed force using minimal bandwidth to provide the commander with accurate situational awareness.[33]

Electronic tools can act as a staff force multiplier, making individuals more efficient. CTF-50 emphasized informational speed, looking for an incomplete picture sooner rather than a complete one later. The KWeb was used as a briefing source and PowerPoint briefs

were held to a minimum. 30 minute KWeb based morning briefs saved the staff many hours when compared to traditional morning briefs lasting one to two hours. Time saved permitted ad hoc planning meetings, again using fresh KWeb based information products.[34]

CTF-50's NCW tools produced value for users at all levels. Many other collaborative systems yield little value for the lowest level contributor, opting instead to satisfy senior officers at the expense of those "feeding the beast."[35] Horizontal information flow, a cherished event in modern day businesses, prospered in CTF-50's NCW system.[36]

It can be argued that during OEF, CTF-50 operated somewhere between the operational level and the tactical level of war. The mature CENTCOM theater, with operations center staffing numbering in the thousands, did not leave much operational level work to the units working in the region. That said however, the CTF-50 staff did have more time to contribute at the operational level, since mundane tactical level daily tasks were largely automated.

One example that supports CTF-50 operating at both the operational and tactical levels was the CARGRU 3 staff's ability to do contingency planning as OEF progressed. In similar circumstances prior battle groups would improvise and react to changes, CARGRU3 staffers managed to develop 35 war plans during the deployment, of which 33 were executed.[37] Perhaps a true operational level staff would have created 99 plans for the 33 executed, but nonetheless improvement over the past was evident.

JFMCC

The joint force maritime component commander (JFMCC), is the functional commander designated by the JFC, in charge of maritime forces. In U.S. Central Command

(USCENTCOM) the 5th Fleet commander is also commander U.S. Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT), as well as the JFMCC.

Numbered fleet commanders have commanded carrier battle groups, and have close relationships with battle group commanders working within their area of responsibility (AOR). This is certainly the case for NAVCENT, which during the last 15 years has seldom been without at least one aircraft carrier in the AOR.

Doctrinally, the JFMCC coordinates and integrates with peer components to turn operational tasks into synchronized and integrated tactical actions to support a JFCs single operational design.[38] The JFMCC must be equally adept at the operational level of war as in fleet tactics since he contributes to six traditional warfighting functions:[39]

1. **Command and Control**—JFMCC is responsible for several C2 tasks including plan preparation, coordination at all levels, course of action (COA) development / resourcing, C4I development, directing operations execution.
2. **Movement and Maneuver**—Recommends maritime force employment and support to the JFC.
3. **Fires**—Plans and executes battlefield shaping operations to accomplish the mission.
4. **Intelligence—**Collects, coordinates, disseminates, maintains maritime information, and supports the targeting process
5. **Logistics—**Makes material and servicing recommendations to the JFC.
6. **Force Protection—**Protects maritime force fighting potential.
7. **Information Operations—**Not a traditional function, JFMCC protects friendly information and information systems, and attacks enemy information-based targets.

During Desert Storm maritime doctrine was not without problem as evidenced by the earlier amphibious interoperability issue. Comments by a Marine Corps Command and Staff author stating that NAVCENT, USCENTCOM's Desert Storm JFMCC, "lacked the expertise to conduct operational level amphibious planning…other staffs took the initiative in scripting the role of amphibious forces in the overall campaign plan. This led to diffuse planning and distorted command relationships."[40] One specific critique centered on NAVCENT not

creating plans for complementary operational-level amphibious landings on lightly defended Al Faw or Bubiyan until the main landing was canceled.[41]

NAVCENTs problems coordinating amphibious operations during Desert Storm foretell future problems when naval forces deploy to immature theaters, without standing maritime staffs. Those forces may quickly find that current contingency plans serve little more than a starting place, and the CSG, ESG or ESF commander serving as the JFC, is left to figure it out, prior to Standing Joint Task Force (SJTF) augmenters arrival. In addition to a quickly developing small conflict, MOOTW and myriad coordination issues regarding interagency and non-government organizations, would severely tax present day CSG or ESG staffs. Quick action may be the way of the future as Major David W. Pendall, USA, projects in his Effects-Based Operations piece:

> SJTFs with interagency and coalition components will have great resources and capabilities embedded within decision making and execution frameworks. Commanders can act with a broader range of options, always seeking the best alternative for target effect and national outcomes. Knowledge is the fuel for operating in the 21st century. Speed and pervasiveness (global reach on demand) of action is the determinate factor in the outcome.[42]

As it stands now, an ESG or CSG staff would have a tough time operating at the operational level in most conflicts. An ESF staff may be better suited, but current frameworks may leave the result far from certain. Future CSG, ESG and ESF commanders must be provided with the required operational level functionality.

JFMCC TACMEMO

Given the nature of the subject, we must remind ourselves that it is simply not possible to construct a model for the art of war that can serve as a scaffolding on which the commander can rely for support at any time. Whenever he has to fall back on his innate talent, he will find himself outside the model and in conflict with it; no matter how versatile the code, the situation will always lead to the consequences we have already alluded to: talent and genius operate outside the rules, and theory conflicts with practice.[43] Carl von Clausewitz

Clausewitz aside, the JFMCC Tacmemo (TM 3-32-03) may provide a mechanism to parlay Joint Maritime Doctrine Command and Control doctrine into enhanced naval force performance at the operational level. The Tacmemo is based on the premise that JFMCC will be a numbered fleet commander or Marine Expeditionary Force commander. Much like the JFACC's Air Tasking Order (ATO) generation and Joint Air Operations Center (JAOC) structure which contributes to unity of effort in the air war, the JFMCC Tacmemo offers similar structures to achieve greater operational capability. The Tacmemo, and the doctrine behind it, does not tell commanders what to do; it provides a way to do it better. It also communicates to other services how naval forces operate to bolster joint interoperability.

The JFMCC staff (see Figure 2) is organized to communicate vertically up and down the chain of command as well as horizontally with other functional components. The goal is to decrease decision times and increase unity of effort by providing a planning and dissemination framework featuring 6 centers, each with a function-based focus[44]:

1. ***Maritime Knowledge Management Center-*** Similar concept to the earlier discussed KWeb emphasizing that commanders and staffs need better information faster.
2. ***Maritime Intelligence and Analysis Center-*** JFMCC's single source for threat assessment, collections, targeting and effects assessment.
3. ***Maritime Future Plans Center-*** Assists JFMCC in long range planning.
4. ***Maritime Operations Center-*** Responsible for JFMCC operational level coordination, synchronization, and guidance in near term planning and execution.
5. ***Maritime Logistics Coordination Center-*** Operational level logistics coordination.
6. ***Maritime Support Center-*** Administrative and other functions not covered in above.

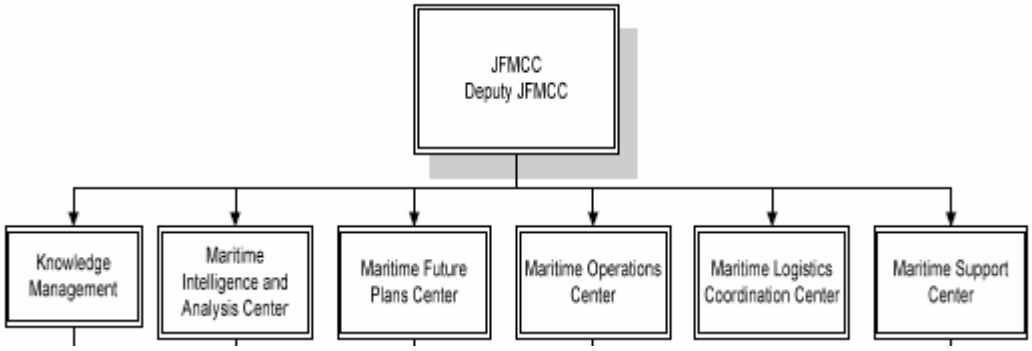

Figure 2 [45]

The JFMCC Tacmemo describes how centers are organized into cells, teams and boards, and can be scaled and tailored to suit the purpose. The staff organization is designed to deliver rapid vertical and horizontal information exchange.

Plan synchronization is achieved by the Maritime Task Plan (MTP). Similar to the ATO, the MTP features a dynamic database where tactical plans are kept and updated to allow JFMCC staff to plan, coordinate and execute operations. A Maritime Support Request (MARSUPREQ) provides a way to request JFMCC capabilities as well as communicate impact if request is not filled.

TM 3-32-03 features a six step JFMCC top down planning process to ensure integration and unity of effort for both long-term (deliberate) and short-term (crisis) planning cycles.[46] Planning with the end state in mind will better coordinate actions and increase situational awareness among participants.

The Tacmemo provides operational transparency to all echelons. Much like the ATO supplies, all maritime forces can reference the MTP to see what, where, when and why other units are operating. Joint force interoperability is enhanced. Much like the K-Web increased information flow among CTF-50 members, the common accessed, centralized Tacmemo databases would get time critical information to those that need it.

One remaining issue is how the Tacmemo process could benefit CSG or ESG echelon units working outside a standing JFMCC and faced with crisis intervention. Is there adequate "reach back" to provide the CSG commander with timely operational level functions needed to shape desired outcomes? Should Strike Group commanders increase their operational capability or should the JFMCC provide a greater operational umbrella to tactical level units?

The JFMCC Tacmemo may allow tactical level units more participation into operational level planning while giving the JFMCC more operational level control over attached forces. Centralized planning and decentralized execution concepts should be the Tacmemo's overarching concept.

Are the new capabilities espoused in SeaPower 21 and Marine Corps Expeditionary Maneuver Warfare facilitated by the Tacmemo? Marine Corps Ship to Operational Maneuver concepts require tactical level commanders to be well informed, however the best information will often be what they see with their own eyeballs, as the operation prepares to cross the beach line. Does the Tacmemo provide the operational speed necessary for future visions?

The Tacmemo broad bushes logistics, Sea Basing and the operational logistic function processes required, will need to be mechanized to help ensure that support matches operational capability.

JFMCC Tacmemo fleet reception will be mixed. Traditionally Naval Officers have been reluctant to embrace doctrine, as the maritime and littoral environment is considered too dynamic to have written doctrine.[47] Will the benefits offered by such a system overcome the change adverse inertia present in Naval Officers? Future C2 improvements should be

balanced with preserving the inherent flexibility resident in decentralized execution, and long adored by naval commanders.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In a crisis, the dusty wire diagram sitting atop most of our desks does not spring into action as one amorphous mass.[48] General A.C. Zinni, USMC (Ret.), Former CINC USCENTCOM

Education – Naval Officers must become better joint operational level thinkers and planners. The speed necessary to plan and strike fast requires all to know the joint playbook. If military span of control continues its increasing horizontal trend, personnel at all levels need to understand the terms and processes behind the magic.

Technology – Forces should identify needs and then let technology help find solutions. Forces at the Strike Group and Force echelon will to continue to experiment with and embrace new information technologies.

Information transparency should be a technology goal. Transparency describes not only technology and bandwidth prerequisites, but also the mindsets required to ensure information does not overwhelm the receiver. Technology advances, automatic processes and vast information sharing can create a cleaner, clearer playing field at the operational level. Wider information dissemination, correctly used, will empower operators and reap unforeseen innovation at all warfare levels.

JFMCC Tacmemo – Naval leaders should continue to seek mechanisms to better coordinate operations at the operational level of war. Commanders and staffs in all services will benefit from a common naval force lexicon and operational scheme. Lessons learned from past JFACC afloat attempts should aid efforts to craft a workable JFMCC operational framework.

Each theater should have increased operational structure to better ensure strategic objectives match tactical execution. The CSGs and ESGs roaming the theater need to have centralized two-way information mechanisms to increase collective situational awareness. The goal should be to provide the right commander with the right information at the right time.

The process must be endorsed and adopted by all services as well as being inherently flexible so that new concepts encompassed by SeaPower 21 like visions are enabled. Opening up tactical maneuver to increased control does not have to mean exactly that. An effective multi-path communication system can allow benefits at all levels. The information age is upon us and it is time for the Naval Force to realize the halcyon days of being safely over the horizon are over.

CONCLUSION

At the operational level … your goal is not to kill the enemy, but to provide opportunities for the commander at the tactical level to kill the enemy. Your operational objective is to put the enemy in harm's way.[49] General Glenn K. Otis, USA, Former Commander U.S. Army Europe

A recent Naval War College flag ranked guest speaker remarked U.S. Naval Officers do not have the best record with respect to operational level planning. Whether naval planners will ever progress to a level required to work with-in a framework described in JFMCC TACMEMO 3-32-3 is unknown. The correct answer may be that they must do so in order to fully exploit new capabilities behind SeaPower 21 vision and increase joint service integration.

SeaPower 21 inspired an increase in Strike Group numbers, but that does not necessarily increase capability without simultaneously providing an effective command and control framework. Regional Combatant Commanders and JFCs will expect the naval force

commander to develop and implement better planning and execution structures in order to squeeze every ounce of performance from maritime forces. Should the U.S. Navy leverage increased CSG and ESG tactical capability into an exponential increase in operational level capability, National Security Strategy will benefit.

NOTES

[1] ADM Vern Clarke, quoted in John Terino, "CNO: Restructuring Needed to Meet Asymmetrical Threats," *Aerospace Daily & Defense Report,* (4 Feb. 2005): http://ebird.afis.osd.mil/ebfiles/e20050204350090.html [4 February 2005].
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